

SCIENCE has long been recognised by police organisations throughout the world as an important and infallible ally as a means of crime detection. With the rapid development of all branches of science in the past few years has come the application by criminals of new technical methods to many forms of crime, and to combat this development it has been found necessary to apply modern scientific methods to crime detection.

Perhaps the most interesting adoption for this purpose is the utilisation by police officials of radio as a swift and efficient weapon in the never-ending battle against crime; and its efficacy has been demonstrated in an almost unbelievable fashion by the Detroit Police Department during the past two years.

The perfection of the radio system of communication between the swift, powerful police automobiles and the radio station at headquarters has enabled arrests to be made in less than 30 seconds after the transmission of the alarm. Eight hundred arrests, at an average time of less than 90 seconds each, have been made by the radio-equipped automobiles of the Detroit police during the past fifteen months. More than 15,000 messages have been transmitted to the cars, and of these more than half have been direct orders to proceed to the scene of some actual or reported crime. The balance of the messages have been descriptions of wanted and missing persons, license numbers of stolen cars, and other police information.

Four to six seconds after the report of a major crime reaches the Detroit police, every radio-equipped police automobile in the city has received the warning simultaneously—a city-wide alarm in a matter of split seconds. One or more of the cars, depending on their location at the time and the seriousness of the crime, speed off to the scene of the trouble.

The dispatcher at headquarters on receiving notification of a crime plugs in on a switchboard and thus establishes connection with the transmitting station which is situated some miles

away. The transmitter is thus automatically put on the air, and the dispatcher at headquarters broadcasts his message, repeating it twice to ensure accuracy. The alarms are clearly received by the automobiles scattered throughout the city, and as they are speeding towards the location of the reported crime, further details as to the nature of the crime and descriptions of the criminals are broadcast.

Two types of automobiles, termed cruisers and scouts, are in use at present. The former are high-powered, seven-passenger touring cars, manned by a crew of four officers armed with automatics, shot-guns, and tear-gas bombs. Complete equipment for the taking of finger-prints is carried also. The scouts are light, fast cars, manned by a crew of two. Each automobile is allocated to a district patrol, but are often ordered to proceed to the location of crimes committed in other parts of the city. When a serious crime such as a bank hold-up or a murder takes place, every police automobile is ordered to converge on the scene of the happening, thus making the task of escaping extremely difficult for the criminal.

The receiving sets are of the six-valve type, and are tuned in to the police radio station, locked in position, and then padlocked in a metal cabinet. The crews of the patrol cars have access to the volume control, but cannot tune to any other station than the one situated at headquarters. The aerials, consisting either of numerous strands of wire or of copper gauze, are mounted in the hoods of the cars. Extra receiving sets are always ready for installation, and the substitution is effected in a few seconds. These sets are tested every eight hours, and half-

hourly test calls enable the patrol crews to determine whether or not their sets are continuously working throughout the day.

Crimes are actually prevented by the speed of the radio-dispatched cruisers. Recently the actions of three men in a large sedan parked in front of a store aroused the suspicions of an alert shopkeeper, who telephoned the police. A cruiser was ordered by radio to proceed to the locality, and in less than two minutes after reception of the message the crew sighted the three suspects. The trio immediately fled, but after a pursuit of some miles were overtaken and secured. All three were fully armed, and were later identified as the perpetrators of a hold-up robbery which had taken place some weeks previously.

Countless incidents such as the one mentioned above, where criminals have actually been caught red-handed, testify to the efficiency and importance of radio when used for police purposes. It is not in the least surprising that criminals of all varieties have come to view the police use of radio with fear. Seconds count with the criminal, so narrow is the margin of escape and capture. With the radio enabling the police to reach the scene while he is still engaged in a crime, or even before he actually attempts a crime, the chance of escape become poorer every day.

The results obtained in the use of radio by the Detroit police were not secured overnight, but are the result of ten years of research in this direction. The Commissioner of Detroit police recently remarked that radio communication for police patrol work is the greatest development of modern times in the prevention of crime and the apprehension of criminals. He predicts that in the near future every policeman on duty in the city will be equipped with a portable receiving set. Experiments to design a suitable lightweight set for this purpose are at present being carried out, and when perfected instantaneous communication with every police officer in the city will be possible.

Radio and Crime Detection

An Efficient Organisation

Our Mail Bag

A Protest.

IN protest against the manner in which a recent children's session was brought to a close while a child was at the microphone finishing a little recitation at 4YA. I am sure Mr. Announcer could have waited for two or three minutes after six o'clock before he started the dinner music, as I am sure the children's hour is just as pleasing as the dinner session.

P.S.—This is not the first time our children's session has been cut short. It is not like Wellington's Mr. Announcer and his do Spot.—Disgusted (T.M.D.).

A Pal in Sickness.

HAVING been confined to my bed for the past three months as a result of a serious illness, I have been unable to write and express my appreciation of the splendid programmes broadcast from 2YA. Mr. Announcer has been a pal of pals to me during my illness, and I have longed for three o'clock to come and hear his cheery voice. I particularly wish to express my most grateful thanks to the sporting commissioner at 2YA. The sporting items were wonderful during my illness, and the manner in which 2YA supplied information, results, etc., of the recent Riccarton Carnival was nothing short of amazing considering the distance Christchurch is from Wellington. There is no more devoted listener to the sporting sessions than I am, and my reason for taking up wireless twelve months ago was the splendid service supplied by 2YA. I have personally recommended to seven of my sporting friends the service provided by 2YA, with the result that they are now enthusiastic listeners. Where I am employed, the railway workshops, the men are good advertising for our local station's sporting service. So long as 2YA supplies the goods the Broadcasting Company need have no fear of the "sports" not renewing their licenses in March next. We are looking forward to the same service from 2YA during the holiday season, and hope we will not be disappointed. Listeners would very much like the sporting man to appear before the microphone nightly and give us his reviews, etc., on the racing. This is done in Australia, and the company should consider this improvement. "One of the Satisfied."

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SOMETHING happened recently which in reality stamps 1929 as a wonder year (states "Popular Wireless"). This was a medical consultation by wireless telephony between doctors in Berlin and Buenos Aires, and was preceded by the transmission to Buenos Aires by wireless of a photograph of the patient's eye. This occurrence is probably one of the most remarkable incidents of the twentieth century, all the more significant inasmuch as it was not a "stunt," but the application of the most recent developments of science to everyday work.

WITH the rapid increase in the number of broadcast stations all over the world, it is disturbing to learn from South Africa that listeners are growing dissatisfied with broadcasting because there is too much of it. It is feared that too plentiful a supply sharpens the critical faculties of the listener to a degree which becomes unpleasant from the broadcaster's point of view. A well-known English journal urges a reduction in the broadcasting hours, in the belief that the programmes would be consequently improved.

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